

EAST BAY express

March 6, 2007

In the Galleries

Our critics review local visual arts exhibitions.

By Jakki K. Spicer

My California – Michael McDermott retranslates California in this exhibit at the Swarm Gallery. "Chaparral" transforms a "monstrous" boulder into a giant opal sitting atop a crushed tree on a Santa Monica road; "We'll Rescue You (Salvation)" turns the sky a threatening, infectious pink behind a orange rescue helicopter, its rotors strangely still. This pink also takes on a threatening tone in "Fever," a sea/skyscape in mottled blues, marred only by an amoebic pink slick heading toward (or away from) a volcanic mouth filled with the same pink substance. McDermott's lines are confident and his colors bold, both in his oils and in his sculptural pieces constructed of urethane, such as "Brigit" and "Collateral Damage" (#1 and #2). Both these pieces employ the same shocking pink, erupting and melting onto the walls. Also worth seeing are Gregg Fleishman's chairs, constructed of surprisingly sturdy and comfortable birch, and Jared Lindsay Clark's "Bild 20" pieces – particularly in his creative (and aromatic) use of cakes of soap.

Through March 17 at 560 Second St., Oakland; SwarmStudios.net or 510-839-2787.